

Captured Document Reveals PCV Plans for Prolonged War

Interior Minister Carlos Andres Perez has released to the press a 17-page document which was confiscated from members of the Communist Party in the presence of an attorney from the Public Works Ministry.

The minister stated, "the document is a dramatic proof demonstrating the pacifistic insincerity of the extremists, who now really favor a 'long war.'" [See Summary No 4425, Press Information Relating to Insurgency and Counterinsurgency: South America (37), p 22]. Minister Perez said that copies of the compromising document have been given to the coalition parties and to the URD, and will shortly be turned over to the AD-ARS and the other parties of the democratic opposition. The text of the document says among other things:

"Under the present conditions, it is advisable to combine immediately the armed aspects as a concession to the other members of the opposition front, which is still a valuable tool in Venezuela. Nevertheless, the armed aspects of the struggle must be given greater and greater emphasis until they become the basic form of the battle. This means that the most important task for the revolutionary movement are those related to the creation of these armed forces and to the waging of a revolutionary war...."

"It must be borne in mind that the solution of the present political crisis does not necessarily mean the solution of the total crisis. This is of course possible, but it is much more probable that the fall of the present government could mean only one step along the road to revolution, but a step very different from that taken on 23 January. That lesson has been learned well...."

"The revolutionary forces must plan their strategy on the following premises:

"1. A revolutionary transformation has been decided upon in Venezuela."

"2. To achieve this transformation, the construction of a political and military instrument capable of directing and realizing it is indispensable."

"3. The way to this revolutionary transformation includes the struggle against the Betancourt Government."

"4. The struggle against the government encompasses sectors much larger than those interested solely in a revolution."

"5. The struggle against Betancourt necessitates the integration of an opposition front which groups together all those interested in overturning the government. This front, which already exists and in which the revolutionary movement does not have the controlling interest, is considering possibilities which range from the coup d'etat to revolutionary war, and including the electoral process. Any solution to the political crisis cannot encompass political and material disarmament of the revolutionary forces which are so much a part of the strategic plan."

"6. Within this front, the revolutionary movement must maintain a clearly differentiated position so that no one can say that he has been deceived, and must educate the people to the idea that the revolution will not cease with the mere fall of Betancourt and, finally as a guarantee that the movement will continue toward its goal, the revolutionary movement must create revolutionary armed forces."

"7. The only way to achieve a true revolutionary transformation, the only way to prevent the fall of Betancourt from becoming another 23 January, the only way to prevent a fascist coup d'etat from culminating in another omnipotent dictatorship, the only way of combatting the illusions of elections, the only way of guaranteeing that a hypothetical peaceful change of presidents does not lower the guard on the revolutionary movement, he resides in the formation of revolutionary armed forces that will begin to wage the war of national liberation....

Therefore, it can be said that the link which unites the fall of Betancourt with the total general process of the fight for national liberation is the existence of the revolutionary armed forces, whose organization and consolidation must be considered as the most important task of the revolutionary movement at this moment...."

"Bearing in mind the fact that a revolutionary, democratic and patriotic government will in all probability be attained only by an armed struggle, it is of interest to determine the characteristics of this struggle. We are confronted with two alternatives: first, the possibility of a rapid military victory; second, the prospect of a prolonged war. Those espousing the rapid victory theory maintain: a) That the Venezuelan crisis will be resolved in the cities, especially in Caracas; and b) that a military insurrection provides this rapid victory. It was upon this theory that the insurrections of Carupano and Puerto Cabello were based. These two uprisings, of great military and political importance, merit a separate paragraph because a study of these insurrections will shed a good deal of light upon the pros and cons of the theory of rapid victory. There are two basic objections to the Calupano and Puerto Cadello insurrections, one of a general politic nature and the other specifically military. In the first place, these uprisings can be classed as adventures, adventures which lacked a coherent integrated political and military

strategy which would have given responsibilities and tasks to each one of our armed detachments. These two uprisings were the results of a subjective evaluation of a given situation rather than an objective assessment of political necessities and concrete circumstances."

"This type of military insurrection can only be the culmination of popular insurrectional process of great magnitude. To take over isolated military establishments in the absence of a popular movement is of little value. But insurrectionists conscious of this, and to play upon the popular imagination and sympathy, can transform an action which of necessity must be of a conspirative and limited nature into a broad mass movement once power has been achieved. It is undeniable that the coups in Egypt, Iraq and Yemen have opened the way to the revolutionary development of the peoples of these nations. The problem is that when one cannot count upon strategic garrisons which will insure triumph, an insurrection borne of cold calculations and not of a political crisis catalyzed by hot emotions, can end only in failure. In the former case, the coup d'etat cannot be distinguished from the adventure, and the revolutionary movement cannot permit itself adventured."

"The only military and political justification for this type of military insurrection is that which is encompassed within the concept of prolonged warfare...." A war of 'rapid decision' maneuvers, as Mao calls them, with forces fragmented in small guerrilla detachments, is a tactic well suited to the war of liberation within Venezuela."

The document goes on to stress the necessity of unifying the MIR and the PCV and consolidating the other opposition forces so that the revolutionary struggle can be temporarily moved from the taint of the word "Communist."

The document concludes:

"Since October 1960, we have made progress. The PCV has not succumbed to the ideological stagnation besetting almost all the Communist parties of the non-socialist world. The Venezuelan party has never deviated from its central policy of political action to attain power. The party has now achieved the greatest triumph of its already long history: The adaptation of revolutionary theory to revolutionary practice. We have made mistakes for which we have been severely punished, and nobody tries to deny that there is but little understanding of basic concepts. But these are mistakes committed in the heat of battle, and it is only through battle that we will correct them. And it is also very recent that we have been punished and because the future is uncertain and full of danger that we must be careful of the 'cry babies' and of the 'prudent ones' who are always ready to say, 'I told you so, I warned you, I advised you not to do that.' And we must also be careful of those who speak of 'terroristic deviation' to hide their own lack of courage...."

"The error lies not in having disinterred the war hatchet, but rather in not having been sufficiently clear headed when we did so. We are profiting by our accumulated experiences, however, and we have reached the point where the disorder and lack of unity of the previous months must be overcome. If we do not correct our faults we will pay the high price of a definitive defeat."

"This meeting of the Central Committee has to signal the qualitative leap necessary in the organization of the struggling Venezuelans."
(Caracas, El Nacional, 9 Mar 62)

Communist Senator Jesus Saria, speaking on behalf of the PCV, has denied that the document released to the press by the Minister of the Interior on 8 March emanated from the Communist Party.

Senator Saria said that the document belonged to no PCV organization nor had it been confiscated, nor had it been printed by his party. He concluded by stating that the Communist's professed desire for pacification "is not a trick." (Caracas, La Esfera, 10 Mar. 63)

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